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ABSTRACT

This report briefly describes the Interagency Vietnam Adoption Committee (IVAC) project and provides data on the children, families, and adoption agencies involved in the project. The IVAC project set out to place black Vietnamese and black American children in black adoptive homes in the United States. As a result of that effort, it was concluded that (1) there is an untapped reservoir of potential black adopters in the United States, (2) placement of children takes too long both for the orphans and the prospective adoptive parents, (3) fees are a deterrent to finding black adoptive families, and (4) because of the lack of black representation in adoption agencies, there is prejudice against black adoptive parents even in the placing of black children. More funding and regional adoption planning are among the recommendations made. Extensive supporting information is presented in three parts: Part I describes the two phases of the project, intercountry adoptions and domestic adoptions; Part II presents statistical data and comments on the source and characteristics of adoption registrants and the children placed; Part III describes the work of adoption agencies that served IVAC registrants. In addition there are 24 tables of data as well as descriptive and supportive documents in the appendices. (MS)

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INTERAGENCY VIETNAM ADOPTION COMMITTEE PROJECT

January 1, 1975 - April 30, 1976

A REPORT ON CHARACTERISTICS OF REGISTRANTS FOR ADOPTION, CHILDREN PLACED AND SERVICES RENDERED BY ADOPTION AGENCIES

PS 008687

TRAVELERS AID INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL SERVICE
Interagency Vietnam Adoption Committee
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Introduction

The implementation of the project to assist Black/Vietnamese children occurred at the time that the political/military situation in South Vietnam was most critical. The effort, therefore, was short-lived and its effect on the problem would appear to be minimal. However, it appears that this evaluation based only on the number of children served bears examination.

Although an insignificant number of children were assisted through the project, the work of the Committee and subsequent project activity had significant value as it relates to the broad field of adoption.

A variety of social and governmental agencies and organizations were brought together to work at the resolution of problems affecting the American/Vietnamese "hard to place" child. They were forced to deal with a myriad of other related issues and problems. Some of these were cooperation between agencies, accountability to the U. S. community and the host-country, regard for internationally accepted standards of adoption practice that apply to children of all races and nationalities, and provision of family services and adoption opportunity in-country as an alternative to intercountry adoption, to name a few.

The requirement that Black Vietnamese children be placed in Black American families re-opened consideration, internationally and nationally, about the child's right to an adoptive family of a cultural-racial-national background similar to his own. Finally, the insistence on the need for an affirmative action program as represented by IVAC raised again the fundamental issue of the existence of unabated racism in American community life and the fact of institutional racism in the service delivery systems that affect people at all levels --international, national and local.

In reference to intercountry-trans-cultural adoptions, we wonder to what extent the activities of foreign adoption agencies operating in countries vulnerable to exploitation, or developing countries, delay and confuscate national and local planning for the nation's children. Do intercountry adoption programs operate in the interest of the child or do they primarily serve foreign adopters? Present litigation provides evidence that these concerns are being addressed. It is interesting that the protest and advocacy for the rights of the Vietnamese children and their parents is coming from lawyers, not from social workers or other disciplines in the area of child development.

In our national life, the demand for black homes for Black children is a heated issue. The claim, made by agencies that provide adoption services and by spokespersons for transracial adoption, that Black adoptive families are unavailable is challenged by Black professionals and the Black community. Attention is being called to the historical "invisibility" of Black children in the minds of White America --a state of mind that generated tens of thousands of orphaned Black children.

The critical question is whether a system designed by and for white people within an economic, social and political milieu hostile to race and difference can be committed to optimally serve Black children. Whether agencies that are controlled, administered, staffed and trained by white personnel can indeed, "see" the children and "find" appropriate families for them.

The project was designed to produce specific data on the characteristics of the project participants. Is there an untapped reservoir of potential Black adopters in the general population? What are the barriers operating in and outside of the child welfare systems that preclude the development of adoption resources for Black children? Can transracial adoption as "placement of last resort" be defended?

Limitations of the Report

The project was an action-oriented --not a research effort. It set out to place Black/Vietnamese and Black American children for whom adoption was indicated in Black adoptive homes in the U. S. Certain limitations were naturally inherent in the data product. Data collection forms and reporting methods were changed or modified several times in the course of project life. For example, the registration form was modified in the second phase of the project and a request for reimbursement form replaced the letter of request for payment previously employed. (See Forms, Appendix-B). Consequently, the statistical data in this report reflect some of the inconsistencies and gaps in information which naturally resulted. Also except for the Project Director, staff turned over at least one time, resulting in modest changes in orientation.

Data was compiled from several sources. The IVAC registration form and reimbursement request form were the main sources; however, a variety of other data sources were also used. Among these were letters, home studies, IVAC project reports, conferences and meetings; contacts with key personalities and workers in international adoption programs, local agency directors and staff, state adoption coordinators, and staff of such organizations as BCDI, Inc., NAACP Tri-State Adoption Project, North American Council on Adoption (NACA),

ARENA, and others. Background information was extracted from proceedings of the July 1973 meeting of the Interagency Committee, its field report and proposal, Congressional documents, and reports from various government agencies, cited in references.

Organization of the Report

The report is presented in three parts. Part-I describes the two phases of the project. Part-II presents statistical data and comments on the source and characteristics of adoption registrants and the children placed. Part-III gives data on adoption agencies that served IVAC registrants. Each part is followed by a summary or general discussion and, finally, the conclusion and suggestions are presented. Descriptive or supportive documents and the bibliography have been placed in the appendices.

PART - I

PROJECT ACTIVITY:

INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTIONS

DOMESTIC ADOPTIONS

PART-I

BLACK/VIETNAMESE ADOPTIONS

The Intercountry phase of the project began actual operation in January, 1975, and ended with the IVAC involvement in placement of children brought in the April emergency baby lift except for limited follow-up activities performed in IVAC.

The original goal of the project was to facilitate placement of 150 Black/Vietnamese orphans.

To achieve this purpose, IVAC had set activities in motion to-

1) recruit adoptive registrants in sufficient numbers to ultimately provide the quantity of approved homes that would be required.

2) identify and set up cooperative relationships and formal agreements with local adoption agencies that would be willing and able to provide adoption services for Black applicants and register the approved homes in IVAC.

3) continue to work with the intercountry adoption agencies to work out procedures, cooperatively, for registering the children available in Vietnam and matching these with the families registered by local agencies.

Result of Project Activity - January 1 - June 30, 1975

Recruitment

During April alone the project registered 106 families interested in adopting Black/Vietnamese children. This was accomplished with the help of cooperating Black and other adoption agencies and through the exposures provided to IVAC staff by a substantial number of Black groups and organizations and Black-oriented television, radio, news services, and a magazine to reach the larger Black community. Also, the role of general media coverage of the situation in Vietnam had a significant impact on recruitment results.

From March thru June 1975, hundreds of telephone calls and approximately 320 inquiries were received from 32 states, the District of Columbia, U. S. territories overseas and four (4) foreign countries. The widespread response to the appeal for homes maybe indicative of the effectiveness of the media in presenting a positive image of the child and in communicating the idea of the need for a national community effort.

Local Agencies

Fourteen (14) local agencies entered into formal agreement with the project to provide recruitment, home studies and post placement supervision on a reimbursement basis. Other agencies cooperated in accepting referrals on families who did not have home studies and did not request reimbursement. A sample of the agreement between agencies and IVAC is shown in Appendix-C.

The 13 voluntary agencies and one (1) state department of public welfare cooperating in the project were located in 7 states and the District of Columbia. A listing of cooperating agencies enrolled during the Vietnam phase of the project is shown in Appendix-B.

Intercountry Agencies

Seven (7) U. S. voluntary agencies in Vietnam were authorized by the Government of Vietnam to process intercountry adoptions. Of these, three (3) agreed to participate in the IVAC program as member agencies. However, these agencies still had not registered any of the children available in Vietnam with the IVAC project.

The Baby-Lift and Outcome of Project Efforts

The crisis situation generated by the emergency Baby-Lift ineffectuated orderly procedures in all the adoption agencies. However, during April and May 1975, the project received 50 homestudies from local cooperating (and non-participating) agencies. These were hastily forwarded to the intercountry member agencies for consideration for matching.

Twenty-two (22) of the studies referred were accepted for placement. Twenty-four (24) of the children arriving in the airlift were placed in the 22 project assisted homes. One family received twins and another accepted two unrelated children (ages 4 and 9) who had lived in the same orphanage and considered themselves as sisters.

Information received from various sources strongly suggested that bias because of race was the main reason for rejection of Black families. Only one intercountry agency reported the reason for non-acceptance of families referred by the project. The report indicates that 7 families were offered placement but rejected the child for reasons of age of child, handicap, sex. Twelve (12) families were rejected because -"no suitable child available", "refused for siblings for casework reasons".

Follow-Up

During the months following the airlift, IVAC sought to provide assistance to the various intercountry agencies (and local agencies serving refugee children). Telephone calls and on-site visits were made. However, the general feeling of the agencies was that no further service was needed.

As far as possible IVAC made printed information available as well as knowledge gained from personal experience about life styles and cultural factors of Vietnamese people to the agencies involved with these children, on request.

Follow-up on the adjustment of the children placed in IVAC-assisted families is reported in an evaluation study now in preparation. Reports from TAISSA staff and some of the local agencies

indicate that the placements are holding and the children are making very satisfactory progress.

The Families

The families who received placement have expressed considerable anxiety about their child in relation to litigation in reference to the Vietnamese children who came in the airlift.

Also, medical and emotional problems affecting a few of the children were a source of anxiety during early placement but these are being satisfactorily resolved for the most part. As indicated in Table-1 most of the children were reported to be free of handicaps. A TAISSA worker reported that the Black/Vietnamese children on the whole were healthy normal children and are making good adjustments in their families.

Table-1 below shows the age, sex, handicap, if any, of the Black/Vietnamese children placed with IVAC assistance and also the agencies that were involved in the placement.

BLACK/VIETNAMESE CHILDREN PLACED
IN BLACK ADOPTIVE HOMES THRU IVAC ASSISTANCE

Table-1

CHILD			AGENCIES INVOLVED	
Sex	Age At Time of Pl'ment	Handicap	International Agency	Local Supervising Agency
F	8	None	Holt Children's Service	Homes For Black Childn. Detroit, Michigan
M	3	None	Holt Children's Service	Homes For Black Childn. Detroit, Michigan
F	3	None	Holt Children's Service	Homes For Black Childn. Detroit, Michigan
F	8	Emotional Trauma	Holt Children's Service	A. A. F. C. S. Chicago, Illinois
F	6	Not Reported	U.S.C.C.M.R.S	
M	5	None	U.S.C.C.M.R.S	
F	5	Not Reported	U.S.C.C.M.R.S.	Cath. Ser. Bureau Miami, Florida
M	2	None	U.S.C.C.M.R.S.	Cath. Ser. Bureau Miami, Florida
M (Twins)	2	None	U.S.C.C.M.R.S.	Cath. Ser. Bureau Miami, Florida
M	2½	Medical problems/ parasites	U.S.C.C.M.R.S.	Cath. Ser. Bureau Miami, Florida
NR	7	Not Reported	U.S.C.C.M.R.S.	Cath. Ser. Bureau Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.
M	4	Intestinal problems/ parasites	U.S.C.C.M.R.S.	Cath. Ser. Bureau Miami, Florida
F	5	None	U.S.C.C.M.R.S.	California

BLACK/VIETNAMESE CHILDREN PLACED
IN BLACK ADOPTIVE HOMES THRU IVAC ASSISTANCE

Table-1 Cont'd

CHILD			AGENCIES INVOLVED	
Sex	Age At Time of Pl'ment	Handicap	International Agency	Local Supervising Agency
F	2½	None	TAISSA	Homes For Black Childn. Detroit, Michigan
F	4	Cleft Palate	TAISSA	Genessee County, D.S.S./ Homes For Black Childn. Flint/Detroit, Mich.
F	9	None	TAISSA	Genessee County, D.S.S./ Homes For Black Childn. Flint/Detroit, Mich.
M	3	None	TAISSA	Peirce-Warwick Adoption Service, Washington, D.C.
M	1½	None	TAISSA	Genessee County, D.S.S./ Homes For Black Childn. Flint/Detroit, Mich.
F	7	Acting out emotional distur.	TAISSA	Genessee County, D.S.S./ Homes For Black Childn. Flint/Detroit, Mich
F	2½	None	TAISSA	Harlem-Dowling, N. Y.
F	6	None	TAISSA	Harlem-Dowling, N. Y.
M	2	None	TAISSA	A. A. F. C. S. Chicago, Illinois
F	3	None	TAISSA	Homes For Black Childn. Detroit, Mich
M	2½	Not Reported	U.S.C.C.M.R.S.	Cath. Charities Bur. St. Louis, Missouri

PHASE II - DOMESTIC ADOPTIONS: AMERICAN BLACK AND MINORITY CHILDREN

A review of data and experiences generated from Phase I of the project revealed information which, when related to unmet domestic adoption needs, was of particular significance. Specifically, Phase I activity produced evidence that

1) there is an untapped reservoir of potential adopters in communities throughout the United States, and among Black American citizens working and living abroad

2) most of the respondees to the appeal for homes for Vietnamese children were interested in adopting a Black child and had no strong preference regarding his origin, ie., Vietnam or the U. S.

3) some local adoption services are willing to serve Black adoptive applicants, if provided support, technical and financial assistance, as needed

4) prospective adoptive families wait an unreasonable period for placement

Based on this information and the knowledge that large numbers of American Black children wait in agency child care facilities for adoptive placement, the project requested DHEW to consider on-going funding of the project for the purpose of serving domestic Black children through the mechanism already in place.

In July 1975, HEW approved the project's proposal. Fiduciary responsibility remained with TAISSA. The interagency consortium which had constituted the policy making board during Phase I of the project

had dissolved with the phasing out of the intercountry program. However, representatives from three of the agencies and organizations which had served on the board remained with the project in a consultative and advisory role.

In addition, except the director, project staff terminated because of the uncertainty of the future of the program. The vacated coordinator position was filled in early August 1975 and permanent clerical staff was hired in September.

The primary objectives in Phase II of the project were:

1. To insure that the families already matched with a Black/Vietnamese child receive post adoptive supervision through their local agencies with any technical assistance they might need during the remainder of the project.

2. To insure that families who have applied to IVAC continue in the adoption process by assisting agencies in their efforts to find local children with whom families can be matched.

3. To refer families without home-studies for same in local communities and follow-up on their progress.

4. Continue recruitment of families to replace any who might withdraw from the process.

5. To meet with agency representatives to clarify IVAC's role, policies and procedures, re-negotiate contracts and reimbursement rates.

6. Continue education of the community, agencies, parents about the needs in adoption through workshops, meetings, media, etc.

7. Continue activities previously outlined which enhance the project, such as evaluation study, attendance at conferences, dissemination of data, coordination with education institutions.

Project Implementation and Activity

Implementation of the new effort, began in July 1975. The project undertook activities to

1) interpret the new program in the professional and lay community and renew agreements with cooperating local agencies and recruit other public and private agencies interested in participating in the project, and

2) conduct a mail-out to registrants not involved with an agency and other respondees relative to their continued interest in adopting, and referral of appropriate registrants or respondees to specific adoption services.

Other activities included efforts to identify the location of groups of children available for adoption and share this information with cooperating agencies.

Also efforts were made to broaden cooperative relationships between the project and other groups, organizations and projects involved in adoption and related areas.

Result of Project Activity

Adoption Agencies

At the end of April 1976, 15 agencies in 5 states, the District of Columbia and Guam were involved in the project as cooperating or participating members. Other agencies referred families with studies.

As a whole these agencies completed 185 homestudies on Black adoptive applicants who were recruited independently or referred by the IVAC project or other projects such as the NAACP-Tri-State Adoption project. One-hundred and eleven (111) children had been placed in 101 homes for the purpose of adoption and post placement supervision was being provided.

The project attempted to work with agencies within the policies and procedures already in force except that agencies were expected to give service to single person applicants and encouraged cooperating agencies to include Black adoption workers and outreach workers on the staff. Three (3) groups had hired Black outreach workers and/or employed a Black worker, usually on a contract basis. Particularly in Florida cooperating agencies had developed a Black adoptions program which would be on-going. Innovative recruitment techniques were being employed by these agencies with good results. Prospective applicants were seen quickly and placements were made readily.

Recruitment

From July 1975 - April 30, 1976, the project enrolled 135 adoptive

registrants. Most families registered from October thru April were recruited by local adoption agencies. However, the project mail-out produced some registrants.

A group of 67 respondees to the initial appeal were sent a follow-up letter, a registration form, and questionnaire inquiring about their present interest in adoption. Twelve (12) completed registrations were returned. Other information showed:

Interested in adopting now	12
Not interested at this time	5
Not interested at all	2
No response	46
Reported child placed	1
Reported home-study in process	1
	67

A group of 16 registrants not active with an agency were sent a follow-up letter and a questionnaire to be completed regarding their continuing interest in adoption. Seven (7) registrants returned a "yes" response; 7 registrants did not respond. One (1) registrant reported a child placed, and one (1) reported home-study in process.

Related Activities

With encouragement and sponsorship of IVAC, NAACP-Tri-State Adoption project's Florida state coordinator set up three meetings in Florida for state public and private adoption services for the purpose of furthering the project's work and providing a forum for

IVAC staff to interpret the modified program and recruit new agency participants.

The outcome of this effort was the enrollment of three (3) of the Florida Catholic Services Bureaus and the Florida Children's Home Society state office which coordinated the activities of its several local branches. In addition, through the Tri-Cities project activity, liaison was established with state coordinators in South Carolina and Tennessee and Georgia. A meeting coordinated by a service in Jackson, Mississippi was well received by the group of private agencies and the state coordinator.

Adoption services in several cities also joined as participating members including New York, Cleveland, Ohio, and Houston, Texas, and Atlanta, Georgia.

Field trips to participating agencies and others provided an opportunity to follow up on the activity, problems and experiences of the agencies.

In addition, these and other contacts supplied the project with information about the estimated number of legally free children waiting in the state or private child care facilities. This information

was shared with agencies that had IVAC assisted families waiting.

It is interesting that in only one situation, the two agencies were able to move into cooperative planning for placement. This situation involved Brookwood Children's Service, New York City and Guam Department of Social Service. (An 8 year old boy will be placed with a U. S. Black family working and living in Guam).

However, agencies with families waiting have shown a willingness to reach out across states to public and private agencies that have reported several hundred children available, and have stated a desire to cooperate with other agencies. Unfortunately, so far the latter agencies have not demonstrated interest in cooperating.

PART-II

CHARACTERISTICS OF REGISTRANTS IN THE ADOPTION PROJECT

Registrations For Adoption By The Month

Out of nearly 350 inquiries and referrals received in the project, 273 were registered for IVAC services. Rate of registration by month is shown in the columns below.

March, 1975	5	October	35
April	106	November	27
May	24	December	36
June	3	January, 1976	3
July	11	February	--
August	11	March	1
September	10	April	1

Note that most registrations occurred in April 1975 in response to the Baby-Lift; however, a steady influx of referrals were made by agencies from October - December as a result of involvement in studying families for Black children. In December, cooperating agencies were informed that project funds for homestudies were exhausted and no new registrations could be accepted after the end of the month. In letters and other contacts with the agencies, the project learned that the reimbursement service was the single important factor influencing the agency decision to recruit and serve Black applicants. Without this assistance, agencies could not finance the studies.

State of Residence

The 273 registrants for adoption were from 22 states, the District of Columbia, U. S. overseas territories and four (4) foreign countries. Table-2 below shows that most of the registrants were residents of Florida (30%), Michigan (17%), Illinois (17%) and New York (12.0%).

REGISTRANTS STATE OF RESIDENCE

Table-2

State of Residence	No. of Registrants	Percent
Alabama	1	
California	2	
Florida	82	30.0
Georgia	1	
Illinois	47	17.0
Indiana	2	
Maryland	12	4.0
Michigan	45	17.0
Minnesota	1	
Montana	3	1.0
New Jersey	4	1.0
New Mexico	1	
New York	33	12.0
North Carolina	1	
Ohio	8	3.0

REGISTRANTS STATE OF RESIDENCE Cont'd

Table-2 Cont'd

State of Residence	No. of Registrants	Percent
Oklahoma	3	1.0
Pennsylvania	4	1.0
South Carolina	1	
Tennessee	2	1.0
Texas	2	1.0
Virginia	4	1.0
District of Columbia	8	3.0
*Other	6	2.0
TOTAL	273	

*Other- W. Africa (1), Virgin Isles (1), Okinawa (1), Guam (1), APO (Spain) (1), APO New York (1)

Source of Registration

Among the 273 registrants, roughly 75 were self referred to the project while 198 were referred by agencies. Most self-referrals were received in Phase I of the project.

Status or Disposition of Registrations

At the end of April 1976, 9% of the families with home studies had withdrawn. Reasons for withdrawing were: unemployment, suitable child not available, decided to wait.

Among the 161 active families, 101 had received a child in placement; 60 were waiting. Among the waiting group placement was in planning in four (4) cases and a child was actively being sought in most other cases.

STATUS OR DISPOSITION OF REGISTRATIONS
April 30, 1976

Table-3

Status	Number of Approved Home Studies	Percent
Approved Home Study-Active	161	59.0
Approved Home Study-Withdrew	24	9.0
Home Study in Process	6	2.0
Reg. Closed in Agency	30	11.0
Reg. Closed in IVAC	28	10.0
Reg. Referred to Local Agency	24	9.0
TOTAL	273	100.0

Fifty-eight (58) registrations were closed in agencies and in IVAC. The reasons for closing were: withdrew at intake, no response, out-of-country, not ready.

Approved Home Studies - Placement Status

In the 161 active approved families, 101 received placement. Agencies reported 111 children were placed from January 1975 thru April 30, 1976. Among the children placed were: One (1) set of twins, two (2) sets of unrelated children and two (2) sibling groups of two children.

APPROVED HOME-STUDIES PLACEMENT STATUS
April 30, 1976

Table-4

Status	Number	Per Cent
Child(ren) Placed	101	63.0
Waiting	60	37.0
TOTAL	161	100.0

This data includes all the children reported placed in families registered in the project. However, it is to be noted that many of the home studies and placements were not assisted through reimbursement from the project

CHARACTERISTICS OF REGISTRANTS

Marital Status

Project policy statement made it clear that IVAC services would be extended to married persons and single persons alike. Most registrants were married couples; 216 or 79% of the registrants were married couples, while 57 or 21% were single persons. Among the single persons were 55 women and two (2) men. Table-5 shows distribution of registrants according to marital status.

MARITAL STATUS OF REGISTRANTS

Table-5

Marital Status	Number	Per Cent
Married Couples	216	79.0
Single Persons - women (55) men (2)	57	21.0
TOTAL	273	100.0

Race/Nationality/Ethnic Origin

Among the 273 registrants, 223 couples and/or single persons (family units) were Black. The race/nationality or ethnic background of the other registrants is presented in

RACE, NATIONALITY & ETHNIC ORIGIN OF REGISTRANTS

Table-6

Background		Number	Per Cent
Black		223	82.0
Black/White		14	5.0
Other:		12	4.0
Black/Oriental	(2)		
Black/East Indian	(1)		
Black/Filipino	(1)		
Black/Puerto Rican	(1)		
Puerto Rican	(1)		
White	(5)		
White/Puerto Rican	(1)		
Not Reported		24	9.0
TOTAL		273	100.0

AGE

Among men registrants the largest number (45 or 21%) were in the age range 30-34 years. The next largest number (34 or 16%) were 40-44 years of age. There were fewer registrants (13%) in the age range 35-39 years.

Among women registrants, 162 or 60% were 25-39 years of age. There were fewer women registrants than men in the age range 40-44 and more women than men registrants 45-49 years.

Table-7 shows the distribution of registrants by age.

AGE OF REGISTRANTS

Table-7

Age	Men		Women	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Under 21	---	---	1	---
21-24	9	4.0	12	4.0
25-29	27	12.0	67	25.0
30-34	45	21.0	51	19.0
35-39	29	13.0	44	16.0
40-44	34	16.0	22	9.0
45-49	15	7.0	26	10.0
50-54	10	5.0	7	2.0
55-59	5	2.0	1	----
60-64	4	2.0	0	----
65-69	1	----	0	----
Not Reported	39	18.0	39	15.0
TOTAL	218	100.0	271	100.0

EDUCATION

Most of the 489 individual registrants for adoption (68%) had attained high school graduation and above while 32% had not attained graduation.

Nearly 26% of all the registrants held the bachelor degree and above.

Only 15 registrants had only elementary school education. Grade attainment for this group was as follows: grade 3- two (2) registrants, grade 5- one (1), grade 6- three (3), grade 7- five (5), grade 8- four (4).

Educational attainment was not reported by 87 or 18% of the registrants.

Table-8 shows the breakdown of educational attainment by sex.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF REGISTRANTS
FOR ADOPTION BY SEX

Table-8

Educational Attainment	Men		Women	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Elementary	11	5.0	5	2.0
High School (Not graduating)	27	12.0	23	9.0
H. S. Graduates (Includes post -grad training, ie., trade sch.)	54	25.0	61	22.0
College 1-3 years	45	21.0	70	26.0
Degree and above	26	12.0	26	10.0
Masters Degree	8	3.0	37	13.0
P. H. D.	1	----	2	----
M. D.	6	3.0	0	----
Not Reported	41	19.0	48	18.0
TOTAL	218	100.0	271	100.0

Family Income

Family income data reflects the combined income of married couples.

The majority or 54% of the family units[1] registered reported income from $8,000-$22,000. Only seven (7) families reported family income under $6,000, and seven (7) showed income in excess of $36,000. Slightly more than 15% of the families registered had income over $22,000 but less than $36,000.

Table- 9 shows family income of registrants for adoption.

[1]Family units refers to the 216 married couples and 54 single persons households registered.

INCOME OF REGISTRANTS FOR ADOPTION

Table-9

Income	Number	Per Cent
over - under		
0 - $2,000	-----	------
$2,000 - $4,000	4	1.0
$4,000 - $6,000	3	1.0
$6,000 - $8,000	11	4.0
$8,000 - $10,000	20	7.0
$10,000 - $12,000	22	8.0
$12,000 - $14,000	26	9.0
$14,000 - $16,000	28	10.0
$16,000 - $18,000	18	6.0
$18,000 - $20,000	18	7.0
$20,000 - $22,000	19	7.0
$22,000 - $24,000	8	3.0
$24,000 - $26,000	8	3.0
$26,000 - $28,000	4	1.0
$28,000 - $30,000	7	3.0
$30,000 - $32,000	8	3.0
$32,000 - $34,000	5	2.0
$34,000 - $36,000	2	-----
$36.000 - $38,000	1	-----
$38,000 - $40,000	-----	-----
$40,000 - $60,000	6	2.0
Not Reported	54	20.0
TOTAL	273	97.0

Employment Status

There were 216 married men registered. In the 177 reporting employment status, 171 were gainfully employed. Only two (2) male registrants available for work reported "unemployed".

Among married women (214), out of 176 reporting employment status, 128 were gainfully employed. Only one (1) reported "unemployed" and 44 showed "housewife".

Among married couples, in nearly 60% of the cases both registrants worked. In just over 20% of the cases only one of the registrants was gainfully employed.

Among the 57 single persons 85% of the women registrants and the two (2) male registrants worked.

Table-10 shows employment status by marital status and sex.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS BY MARITAL STATUS & SEX

Table-10

Employment Status	Married Men		Married Women		Single Men		Single Women		Combined Total	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Percent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Employed (salaried)	160	74.0	127	58.0	2	100.0	47	85.10	336	68.0
Self-Employed:										
Professional Practice	7	3.0	---	---	---	----	---	---	7	1.0
Owner-Proprietor	7	3.0	1	---	---	----	1	2.0	9	2.0
Home Industry or Service	---	----	3	1.0	---	----	---	---	3	----
Unemployed	2	----	1	---	---	----	1	2.0	4	----
Other:										
Housewife/Husband	---	----	44	20.0	---	----	---	---	44	9.0
Retired	3	1.0	---	---	---	----	---	---	3	----
Student	1	----	2	---	---	----	1	2.0	4	----
Welfare Recipient	---	----			---	----	1	2.0	1	----
Not Reported	37	17.0	38	18.0	---	----	5	9.0	80	17.0
TOTAL	216	98.0	216	97.0	2	100.0	55	102.0	489	97.0

OCCUPATION OF REGISTRANTS BY TYPE AND SEX

Table-11

Occupation Type*	Men		Women	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Professional	13	6.0	2	
Secondary Professional	17	8.0	59	22.0
Management	17	7.0	20	8.0
Clerical & Sales	14	6.0	46	17.0
Protective Services	16	7.0	2	
Human Ser. Related	11	5.0	20	7.0
Skilled Workers	22	10.0	9	3.0
Semi-Skilled Workers	37	17.0	12	5.0
Unskilled Workers	21	10.0	12	4.0
Housewife			44	17.0
Military	6	3.0		
Other	6	3.0	4	2.0
Not Reported	38	18.0	41	15.0
TOTAL	218	100.0	271	100.0

*The designations of occupational type are not absolute since data available did not describe the tasks.

1. Professional includes physicians, engineers, scientist, ministers
2. Secondary professional includes teachers, social-workers, accountants, journalist and reporters, registered nurses
3. Management includes small business owners, executives, managers
4. Protective service includes policemen, firemen, postal workers, reservation agent, secret service
5. Human services related includes aides, LPNS, counselors, etc.

HEALTH

Most of the registrants reported health as "good", "excellent". There were however reports of physical conditions which were felt to be stable but irreversible. Among these were controlled diabetes (1), heart condition (1), paraplegia (1), crippling from polio in early life (1).

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION

It is interesting to note that while Catholic agencies were responsible for 80 referrals, only about one-half of the applicants followed the Catholic faith. Table-12 shows the distribution of registrants according to religious affiliation.

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION

Table-12

Affiliation	Number	Per Cent
Catholic	26	10.0
Catholic/Protestant	13	5.0
Protestant	175	64.0
Other	3	1.0
Not Reported	55	20.0
TOTAL	273	100.0

CHILDREN OF REGISTRANTS

Among the 273 registrants, 115 or 42% had children under 18 years of age; 40% did not have children. Table-13 shows the status of the family in regards to children.

CHILDREN OF REGISTRANTS FAMILY

Table-13

Category	Number of Families	Per Cent
Children under 18 yrs. of age	115	42.0
None	112	41.0
Not Reported	46	17.0
TOTAL	273	100.0

Table-14 shows the number and relationship of the children reported by the registrants.

CHILDREN OF REGISTRANTS: NUMBER AND RELATIONSHIP

Table-14

Children under 18 yrs. of Age	Number of Children	Per Cent
Natural (biological)	126	69.0
Adopted	51	28.0
Foster	5	3.0
Relative (nieces, nephews, cousins)	2	1.0
TOTAL	184	100.0

Registrants Responses To Kind of Child Preferred

The data available on age, sex and health status of the child preferred is probably influenced by the fact that in some instances a child was placed when the registration form was completed. In reference to age, the data presented in the table below does not give a complete picture. The registration form used in Phase I of the project allowed specific statement of age preference. The form was changed in Phase II. The respondent was asked to check age preference from a series which included infant-5, 6-8, 9-11, etc. Therefore, it should be noted that the number of responses reflected under 5 year olds may not indicate a true preference but a response which was limited by the registration form. As indicated below, 57% of all the registrants preferred a child under 6 years of age. Nineteen percent (19%) would accept an older child. (Table 19 Age of Child At Time of Placement shows that 72% of the children placed were 5 and under).

PREFERRED AGE OF CHILD

Table-15

Highest Age Acceptable	Number of Responses	Percent
6 months	14	5.0
1 year	6	2.0
2 years	18	6.0
3 years	26	9.0
4 years	19	7.0
5 years	76	28.0
6 years	26	9.0
7 years	10	3.0
8 years	9	3.0
9 years	2	---
10 and above	11	4.0
Did not respond	46	17.0
TOTAL	273	100.0

PREFERRED SEX OF CHILD

Table-16

Sex	Number of Responses	Percent
Male	76	28.0
Female	88	32.0
Either	60	22.0
Did not respond	49	18.0
TOTAL	273	100.0

Registrants responses indicated a fairly even distribution between male and female children when viewed in relation to the category "Either". Slightly more boys than girls were placed as shown in Table-21 (Sex of Children Placed).

HANDICAP

Table-17

Item	Number of Responses	Percent
Would adopt handicapped child	35	13.0
Would not adopt handicapped child	123	45.0
Did not respond	115	42.0
TOTAL	273	100.0

While 13% of the registrants indicated willingness to adopt a handicapped child, 18% of the 111 children placed were mild to severely handicapped as shown in Table-20 (Handicaps).

Most families responding "yes" to the item on handicaps indicated the kind of handicap they might accept:

- child with braces, medication required - minor correctible
- minor, such as corrective shoes, dental
- depending on the seriousness
- correctible

There were less than eight (8) responses to the question -would you adopt a handicapped child if some of the cost for medical/other services was provided? The responses were "yes".

Preferred Background of Child - Race/Nationality/Ethnic Background Of Child

Registration forms used in the first phase of the project were for Black/Vietnamese children and preference of background was not an item. However, letters and comments indicated acceptance of children of other racial/national/ethnic backgrounds.

In 83 registrations which included an item on preference regarding the child's background, 46% preferred a Black/Black child, 8% reported "any", 9% did not respond and 37% showed various combinations of Black children, ie., Black/white -American Indian -Oriental -West Indian.

In three (3) cases white families were seeking a child of white/white or white/oriental background, or full blooded Vietnamese child.

Summary - Characteristics of Registrants for Adoption

Characteristics of Adoptive Registrants

1. The registrations received were from 22 states, the District of Columbia, and U. S. overseas territories, but nearly 75% of all registrants were residents of four (4) states: Florida (30%), Illinois (16%), Michigan (17%), and New York (12%). This was perhaps due to the fact that two (2) agencies (Homes For Black Children, Detroit, Michigan and Afro-American Family and Community Services, Chicago, Illinois) were involved very early in piloting recruitment for families for Black/Vietnamese children.

The Florida registrants (30%) were of particular significance since efforts to recruit cooperating agencies in this region did not commence until late August 1975. Part of the effectiveness in Florida can be attributed to the presence of the Tri-State NAACP project. Although this group had been active in general recruitment for over a year, it was not until IVAC reimbursement services became available that the applicants recruited were accepted by local agencies for adoptive services in large numbers.

2. Thirty-five (35) percent or 60 of the 185 families with approved home studies were still awaiting placement at the end of the project year. Review of home studies available to the project revealed that 11 families had waited from 1½ to 3 years.

3. Most or 79% of all registrants were married couples. Only 21% were single persons -(55 women and two (2) men).

4. Four (4) percent or 12 families were white or inter-racial/ national couples or single persons, the rest were Black couples or single persons.

5. Registrants ranged in age from 21-69 years. Fifty percent (50%) of the men registrants were from 30-44 years while 60% of all the women registrants were 25-39 years old.

However, 9% (or 65) of the women registrants were 40-49 years of age. It would appear that agencies might effectively foster adoption for older children from among this older group, most of whom were single persons.

It was also noted that there were fewer men registrants in the age range of 35-39 than in the next higher and lower age range.

It is suggested that the variables related to age might be successfully incorporated into predictive instruments which might result in cost-effectiveness impact on agency recruitment and adoption services.

6. The registrants tended to be better educated. Only 11% of all registrants reported less than high school graduation. Nearly

one-fourth of all the registrants held degrees at the bachelor level and above. This finding is of significance particularly in relation to recruitment and management of the home study process.

7. Over half (54%) of all registrants had a combined family income between $8,000-$22,000. Seventeen (17) percent earned over $22,000 while only 6% had earnings less than $8,000. One (1) applicant was a welfare recipient and three (3) were pensioners.

8. All but 52 of all the registrants were gainfully employed. Among the married women (216), out of 170 reporting employment status, 130 were gainfully employed; 44 indicated "housewife". Forty-eight (48) of the 55 single persons were gainfully employed. Three registrants reported unemployed.

More than half of all registrants were white-collar (professional) workers. Except for a few laborers, the rest were blue-collar. While occupations ranged from citrus farm worker to engineer and physician, most registrants were employed in teaching, social and health related fields, office management and protective services (policeman, fireman). A significant number of married registrants held positions in similar occupations.

9. Health-

Most of the registrants reporting health status indicated good to excellent health. Four (4) reported physical conditions which were felt to be stable but irreversible.

10. Religious Affiliation-

Most of the registrants (63%) were Protestant by religious orientation. In nearly one-fourth of the cases religious affiliation was not reported.

11. Slightly more of the registrants had children under 18 years of age than did not. Among the 184 children reported, 51 or 28% were adopted, 5 were foster children and two (2) were relative children.

12. Registrants indicated a greater acceptance of shool-aged children than is generally expected. 19% of all registrants reported acceptance of children 6-14 years of age.

13. Registrants preference regarding the sex of the child showed girls favored over boys to some degree but the large number of not reported might suggest that sex of the child might not be a deterrent to acceptance.

14. Although 13% of the registrants indicated a willingness to adopt a handicapped child, 20% of all the children placed had handicaps of varying degrees of severity.

CHILDREN PLACED WITH

IVAC REGISTRANTS

January 1 - April 30, 1976

Placement of Children for Adoption

During the period March 1975 through April 30, 1976, adoption services reported 111 children placed for adoption with families registered in the project. Information available to the project now indicates that only two (2) of these placements failed. Table-18 shows placements by month of occurrence.

CHILD PLACEMENTS BY MONTH

Table-18

Month	Number of Children Placed
March 1975	5
April	9
May	10
June	13
July	9
August	7
September	6
October	5
November	11
December	12
January 1976	4
February	4
March	--
April	1
Not Reported	14
TOTAL	111

Age of Child At Time of Placement

Most of the children placed (72%) were under 5 years of age but 13% were 6 and over. In 17% of the cases age was not reported.

Table-19 shows age of the child at time of placement.

AGE OF CHILD AT TIME OF PLACEMENT

Table-19

Age of Child	Number	Per Cent
Under 6 months	22	20.0
6 - 11 months	12	11.0
1 year	11	10.0
2 years	13	12.0
3 years	9	8.0
4 years	6	5.0
5 years	7	6.0
6 years	5	4.0
7 years	2	2.0
8 years	2	2.0
9 years	3	3.0
10 years	---	----
11 years	1	1.0
12 years & over	1	1.0
Not Reported	17	15.0
TOTAL	111	100.0

Handicaps

Data available to the project shows 20 children with handicaps of varying severity among the 111 children placed in adoptive homes. The nature of the handicaps and number of children affected is shown in Table-20. Fourteen (14) of the children were placed with married couples, 6 were placed with single women adoptors.

HANDICAPS

Table-20

Kind of Handicap	Number
Cerebral Palsy	1
Cleft Palate	1
Deprivation/Lactose Deficiency	1
Emotional Disturbance	6
Extra fingers/missing finger bone	1
Microcephalic	1
Prematurity	2
Retarded, severe	2
Sickle cell carrier	1
Social Malady	1
Not Reported	2
TOTAL	29

Sex of Children Placed

Unfortunately, the data collection instrument did not include sex as an item for agency response. However, wherever sex of the child was available the information was recorded and is shown in Table-21 below. Sex of the child is not reported in nearly half the cases but in the reported cases more boys than girls were placed.

SEX OF CHILDREN PLACED

Table-21

Sex	Number	Per Cent
Male	35	32.0
Female	29	26.0
Not Reported	47	42.0
TOTAL	111	100.0

CHILDREN PLACED: RACE/NATIONALITY

Table-22

Race/Nationality	Number	Per Cent
Black U. S.	83	75.0
Black/Vietnamese	24	22.0
Other Ethnic	4	3.0
TOTAL	111	100.0

Characteristics of The Children Placed for Adoption

1. Over half (53%) of all the children placed were under 3 years of age. However, 13% were from 6-14 years of age. In 17% of the cases age was not reported.

2. Where sex of the child was reported, data shows that more boys than girls were placed. 35% were male, 26% were female, and 47% not reported.

3. Most of the children placed were American Black children. Twenty-two (22%) percent were Black/Vietnamese and 3% were of other national/ethnic backgrounds.

4. Among the 111 children placed 20 or nearly 10% were reported to have handicaps of varying severity. These handicaps ranged from "probably slow" to "severe retardation" and from correctable birth defects to cerebral palsy and microcephaly.

PART III

AGENCY PARTICIPATION

AGENCY PARTICIPATION

During both phases of the project tremendous effort went into developing a network of local cooperating agencies. Enrollment of agencies to participate in the intercountry phase of the project was particularly difficult. For the most part, local agencies were reluctant to become involved in intercountry adoptions for a variety of reasons. Among these were: 1) the cumbersomeness of the process and unfamiliarity with intercountry adoption procedures; 2) reluctance to deter families from meeting local needs; 3) lack of outreach programs; 4) restrictions by boards and funding sources; 5) other priorities; 6) fear of usurpation of authority. The project was fortunate to have three agencies that had been involved in the committee from the outset and these agencies provided most of the families for consideration for intercountry adoptions. However, with the developments related to the airlift other agencies quickly gave their support.

Most of the agencies were retained through the transition to domestic adoption in Phase II of the project, others were incorporated and a few agencies, though not under formal agreement, were awarded reimbursement assistance, on request, for processing individual applications referred by IVAC.

The letter of agreement between the agency and the project contained a statement of expectations placed on cooperating agencies, a listing of adoption services which the project would reimburse, and the amount of reimbursement. Also, the procedure for obtaining reimbursement was outlined. A sample letter of agreement is shown in Appendix-C.

Thirty-one (31) agencies participated in the registration and referral aspect of the project. However, 15 "cooperating" agencies located in Florida (8), Michigan (1), New York (2), Illinois (1), New Jersey (1), the District of Columbia (2) participated in the reimbursement program. Because of limited funds all the studies and placements accomplished by cooperating agencies (for which assistance was indicated) could not be reimbursed. Of the 185 registered families with home studies done, 119 were reimbursed through the project.*

Reimbursement for Adoption Services

As needed, the project reimbursed cooperating agencies for part of the cost of adoption services rendered to project registrants. Costs which could be partially reimbursed included home-study fees, post-placement supervision and travel costs for pre-placement activity which could not be met otherwise.

*Eleven (11) self-referred registrants already had approved homestudies from local agencies.

Table-23 lists all the agencies that received reimbursement service, the number of home studies reimbursed, number of post placement fees reimbursed and other cost reimbursed by the project.

AGENCIES RECEIVING REIMBURSEMENT FOR ADOPTION SERVICES

Table-23

Agency	Number of Home-Studies	Number of Post-P'ment	Other
Local:			
Afro-American Family and Community Service	19	14	
Cath. Charities Bureau, Inc. Jacksonville, Florida (3-Fla. agencies involved)	9	3	
*Catholic Ser. Bureau, Miami	16	11	
Catholic Social Service St. Petersburg, Florida	1	1	
**Children's Home Society of Fla. (State Office - Jacksonville)	16	12	
Children's Home Society Trenton, New Jersey	1	--	
Family & Child Services of Washington, D. C.	5	2	
Harlem-Dowling, New York	2	2	1
Homes For Black Children Detroit, Michigan	23	10	1
Peirce-Warwick Adoption Ser. Washington, D. C.	15	6	

AGENCIES RECEIVING REIMBURSEMENT FOR ADOPTION SERVICES

Table-23 Cont'd

Agency	Number of Home-Studies	Number of Post-P'ment	Other
Spence-Chapin Services to Families & Children-New York		1	
Intercountry:			
Holt Adoption Program, Oregon			
TAISSA, New York		12	
U. S. Cath. Conf. on Refugee and Migration Service, N. Y.	9	9	
TOTAL	119	83	2

*Including Catholic Services Bureau, Ft. Lauderdale and Orlando, Florida

**Including Children's Home Society, branches in Miami and Orlando, Florida

Agency Practices

From the data available, an effort was made to identify 'trends' in agency practices in relation to waiting time of applicants and prospective adoptive parents, type of family receiving placement, and type of child selected for placement. At best, any commentary on apparent 'trends' would be tentative in view of the limitations in the data. In spite of these,the findings bear examination.

Waiting Time

From the data it appeared that follow-up on new applicants was reasonably quick. However, after the initial interview length of time for the homestudy varied from one month to six months or more in some cases. This is partially explainable in view of the limited number of adoption workers available to the agency, but it would suggest that more priority be given to staffing of adoption services.

Twenty four (24) families with approved studies withdrew. More than three-fourths withdrew because no suitable child was available; the others withdrew because of changes in the family situation --- unemployment, housing, illness, not ready. One family withdrew because of problems with the worker in the host state in an attempt to adopt siblings. The worker wanted the family to take a third unrelated child.

Sixty (60) registrants with approved home studies were still waiting for placement as of April 30. For the families waiting, it appeared that waiting time was directly related to the availability of children to the home study agency.

As the agency relies on public agencies (and a few private child care institutions) for referrals of children needing adoptive placement, they are subject to the whims and vagaries of adoption workers responsible for the children. In addition, the children referred are the hardest to place children. At the same time other more placeable children wait (often until they are hard to place), in the public welfare which is also understaffed for adoption services, for his turn. Although the state exchange has improved the situation in reference to referrals, still most of the studies submitted by private agencies are turned down by the adoption worker; yet the child continues to show up on the exchange.

In a review of 29 cases on file in the project in which the home study had been accomplished prior to 1975, it was found that eleven (11) families had been waiting from 1½ to 3 years. In an attempt to receive placement, three families had changed agencies at least once. It was also learned that in cases with peculiar circumstances such as family composition, age or disability of an applicant, single applicants, often a child was not actively sought for the family, but

the family was kept on the agency roster to be used as a placement of last resort in case a child with special needs should come along.

Among the agencies involved placements were made more quickly in Florida and these agencies showed the highest rate of placements in relation to the number of home-studies done. All the other agencies fell behind in placement activity when related to the number of homes approved.

It would appear that white southern agencies have more ready access to children both from their own child-caring facilities and from the public welfare department. It also suggests that more children generally are available in the southern states perhaps because of the low priority apparently placed on adoption services in the region in the past. A report by a state adoption coordinator indicated that children who are already released remain in foster homes because of lack of adequate staff to prepare them for adoptive placement.

Type of Family Receiving Placement

All but 12 of the 111 children placed went to two-parent families. These families ranged from low-low income citrus workers and laborers to physicians, the highest income group. This would suggest

that parenting ability and genuine desire to have a child outweighed other factors in selection of a home for a child.

In 98% of the cases, registrants from southern agencies were two-parent families. This might suggest the general availability of two-parent families and as a result single-parent applicants are discouraged. However, the willingness to use single parents is indicated in the fact that one agency placed a child with a single man who already had a family of two adopted and two foster children.

The northeastern and mid-western agencies registered most of the single persons, all women. Eleven (11) of these families received placement. A significant number dropped out after the home study because they were seeking infants and young children were not available to the agency.

Type of Child Selected for Placement

There was high agreement between adopters request and the child placed as regards age and sex. However, in half or more cases data was either not reported on the registrants preference or was not reported on the child. In the 59 cases reporting on age, the child's age was in agreement with the applicants request; in two cases, one

child was older and one child younger than the applicant requested.

In reference to sex of the child, in 43 cases sex requested was same as sex of child placed; only in four (4) cases was there non-agreement.

It is expected that in the group not reporting (58% for sex of child and 46% for age of child) there would be no significant difference in agreement between adopter request and child placed.

Adopter request and selection of the child with a handicap for placement indicated low agreement. Only 13% of all the registrants showed a willingness to accept a handicapped child. Eighteen percent (18%) of the 111 children placed had handicaps of varying severity.

In a check of agreement between adopters request and placement of a handicapped child, data showed that in 6 cases there was agreement, in 6 cases non-agreement, and in 8 cases the applicants had not responded to the item.

While the children with handicaps were placed with families who were financially comfortable as well as with the lowest income families,

it did appear that lowest income families received the most severely handicapped children ---severely retarded, cerebral palsy. This raises a question about how long the agency can assist the families to obtain the services and resources needed from the community in order to care for these children, particularly since the services required are in limited supply and families at the lowest end of the spectrum are often unable to demand that services are provided them. Also it would appear that this type of child might strain the meagre family resources beyond the family's ability to manage, thus creating a new problem of family dependency.

Inter-Country - Inter-State Placements

Inter-country placements involved Vietnam and the United States. Inter-state placements involved arrangements between the District of Columbia -Virginia -Maryland, and Illinois and Indiana. It should be noted though that the agency processing placements between D. C. -Maryland -Virginia has a license to serve the metropolitan area and working relationships in place over a long period of time. The cases involving other states were complicated and time consuming. One placement did not take place because of "worker problems".

INTER-COUNTRY - INTER-STATE PLACEMENTS

Table-24

Type	Number of Children	Per Cent
Inter-Country	24	22.0
Inter-State	8	7.0
In-State	79	71.0
TOTAL	111	100.0

In general, the introduction of the idea of interstate placements tended to elicit negative responses from agency workers. It would appear that the general feeling is that these arrangements require far too much time and that most of the decision-making in interstate placement is outside the worker's control. In addition, some felt that adequate numbers of families are available in the state of the child's birth and the agency had the responsibility of finding them.

Fees

That fees are a barrier to recruiting and retaining would-be Black adopters was borne out in project experience. The findings strongly supported the attitude often reported to be held in the Black community that adoption is a service to the community which rightfully should be paid by the community. (A similar attitude is currently being voiced by strong adoptive parent organizations composed primarily of white persons).

While eighteen (18) project families contributed to the agency fee, in 80% of all the cases project families met the costs for medicals, transportation for preplacement and placement activities, legal fees and related expenses. The information available suggests the need for developing alternative means of financing adoption services, particularly in the private sector where adoption fees are a principal source of income. Although the action created financial difficulties, some agencies have reduced their requirement to a twenty-five ($25) dollar application fee for Black and other minority applicants.

Finding The Children

It became apparent from the data that the success of any agency in finding families is directly related to the experience of the family with the agency and the early placement of a child for adoption. Private agencies have considerable difficulty "finding" a child even though most adoption information from authoritative sources report that 40-60,000 children are available. Consequently approved families are kept waiting for long periods, grow weary and drop out, or do not receive placements at all.

In adoption it is generally said that referral from people who have succeeded in adopting is the best advertisement. It would appear then that any special efforts would soon lose the confidence of the people if their expectation to receive a child in placement is continually aborted.

Most of the children available for adoption are locked into public welfare systems. Public agencies are understandably exceedingly slow in service delivery. The nature of the bureaucracy augurs most unfavorably for a child in need of adoptive placement. Yet public agencies appear to insist on personally studying a family for each child in care, even though these agencies haveinsufficient staff to process homestudies in adequate numbers to meet the need of waiting children.

It was the feeling of the public sector that their adoption services should be strengthened; that staff of public agencies is better trained to process adoption of wards of the state. Further, an often expressed fear of public welfare personnel was that the risk was high that placements handled by private agencies might fail and the child returned to public care.

Private agencies felt that, as a rule, only the hardest to place children were referred to their services, and that homestudies submitted for consideration for other children were turned down by public workers for petty reasons.

Lack of trust and a sense of competitiveness between agencies, public and private, was a barrier to cooperation. There existed serious disagreement between agencies regarding adoption practices including evaluation of applicants, child selection, preparation of the child, preplacement activity, post adoptive supervision and related concerns. In the areas visited, personnel of both public and private adoption services, aware of the problems and the negative effects they have on the movement of children into adoption, were working earnestly to find solutions. However, they lacked a coordinating body with sufficient authority to implement suggestions to effect needed changes.

Other Considerations

The experiences of families as it relates to the adoption services provided them was not built into the data collection instrument. For the reason of the priviledged relationship between clients -agency, the project did not attempt to survey the project families regarding their experiences. Homestudies were not required in Phase II of the project as the role of conduit for channeling families to inter-country agencies was not appropriate in the domestic program.

Research efforts undertaken in the future might explore the experiences of Black and other ethnic groups that are served by agencies that are administered and staffed by white personnel. In this regard, it would seem appropriate to explore the control of workers in the selection of the child for placement.

The value of such an effort would be in terms of better service to adoptive applicants and the child. The value of developing such knowledge for inclusion in social work curriculum and in-service training of staff is, of course, obvious. Among others, Herzog, Sudia, Harwood and Newcomb have reported on the perceived experiences of applicants and social workers in the adoption process (See References).

SUMMARY - AGENCY

1. Date of applicant registration and completion of the home study in a significant number of cases indicated agency services were being provided fairly swiftly.

2. Nearly all the waiting families were in the northeastern and mid-western states and individual cases in the southwest indicated problems in that area.

3. The largest number of placements were made by southern agencies and waiting time for approved families was brief.

4. A higher percentage of children with handicaps, including a child with cerebral palsy, were placed with single female adopters. This suggests the necessity of reviewing agency policies for discriminatory practices in the selection of children for single person adopters. It would appear that single persons are offered those children who are not readily acceptable to couples who might better meet the demands imposed on a family by a seriously handicapped child. The same practice of placing severely handicapped children with low -low income couples might indicate a kind of discrimination in child selection for the poor.

5. There was high agreement between the adopter request and the age and sex of the child placed.

In 58 cases the child's age and adopter's request were in agreement; in two (2) cases the child was reported to be older or younger than requested. However, data was not available for all adopters and the child placed.

The adopters request and the sex of the child placed was in agreement in all but four (4) cases. In 64 cases either the child's sex, the adopters request or both were not reported.

The high agreement between the adopters request and the sex and age of the child placed suggests agency care in selection of the child and consequently an enhancement of the opportunity for success in placement. It is also reasonable to assume that among the "unknown" cases, a high degree of agreement might be expected.

6. Interstate placement is generally regarded as too troublesome to provide a ready solution for children waiting for placement.

*7. Fees are a barrier to recruiting and retaining Black applicants for adoption.

8. Success in finding families to adopt is directly related to early placement with approved families, the agencies best referral source. *Private agencies have considerable difficulty in "finding" a child for approved families.

*9. The lack of confidence in competency, as well as competition, between agencies, public and private, is a deterrent to movement of children into adoptive homes.

*10. Private agencies lack the financial resources necessary to make their fullest contribution to reducing the number of Black children needing permanent homes.

*11. Both public and private adoption services are seriously understaffed.

*Findings similar to these were reported in, Families for Black Children, (1972) (See References).

Conclusion

In its inception the project posited the assumption that Black families were available for Black/Vietnamese children, that intercountry adoption agencies had little, if any, interest or experience in serving Black adoptive applicants, and that local adoption agencies all but two which are administered and staffed by white personnel would require inducements to serve Black families.

During the domestic adoptions phase of the project the assumptions remained except, of course, the reference to intercountry adoption agencies.

The project's experiences strongly support these assumptions. There was a heavy response from the Black community to adopt Black children, both Vietnamese and American.

Under a reimbursement for services arrangement, a group of 15 adoption agencies completed approved studies on nearly two-hundred families during the project life, and placed 111 children with 101 project families; only 24 were Black/Vietnamese children.

At the end of April 1976, sixty (60) families were waiting for

placement and 24 approved families had withdrawn; 18 of these dropped out because no child was available. Another group of nearly 24 registrants were seeking home studies.

In reference to project participants, in summary, adoptive registrants had the following predominant characteristics: married, between the ages of 25 and 44, 13 or more years of formal education and training; both parents work outside the home in white and blue collar jobs and have a combined family income averaging $15,000 - $16,000 annually. One (1) out of every two (2) registrants is likely to have one or more natural or adopted children. The applicants will be seeking a child up to five years of age, however, one (1) out of every ten (10) families will be interested in a child 5-10 years of age. Less than 2% of the families would be willing to pay a fee for homestudy but would be willing to pay cost of transportation for preplacement activities, legal fees and related costs.

Our findings suggest that recruitment activity for Black families is probably directed to a less sophisticated and less financially stable population and this fact may account in large measure for the failure in finding adequate numbers of homes for Black children.

In addition, it may also imply that handling of applicants may

be a very large factor in determining whether a family once recruited remains in the adoptive process to completion. Worker bias and stereotypic ideas of applicant characteristics is a cause for applicants to withdraw. That is, in as much as the expectation is of a less sophisticated applicant, agencies may "turn families off" by the workers misconception of who the adoptive applicant is.

Further, recruitment appeals are not designed to reach the population of prospective adopters, again, because of the misconception of public information developers.

Fees are a deterrent to finding Black adoptive families, as less than 2% were willing to pay a homestudy fee.

Sixty (60) registrants with completed home studies were still waiting for placement at the end of the project year; twenty-four (24) had dropped out in despair. This fact is extremely significant since at the same time agencies contacted in the northeastern and mid-western states reported the placement of Black children in white homes as "a last alternative", or "placement of last resort". It is also significant that agencies reported that they closed intake because children were unavailable.

The number of young Black children placed in Black families in the south, particularly, in the brief history of the project suggests that there is still a sizeable population of young Black children coming into child care systems. Both public and private agencies have reported that intake of Black applicants for young children has been mostly discouraged. At the same time, Black infants and children under 5 years of age are being placed in white adoptive homes while Black families wait.

In its report of December 1975, Opportunity, a publication of the Boys and Girls Society of Oregon stated that adoption agencies placed 747 Black children in white families in 1974; one-fourth of the 3066 children placed by reporting agencies were placed in white families. The report continues on to make a strong statement for "inter-racial" adoption

White respondees to the appeal for homes for Black/Vietnamese children told of receiving one or more Black American children in recent adoptive placement.

ARENA News Annual Report - 1975 indicated that 30% of the 50 Black children placed that year went to non-Black families. This

fact is interesting particularly since ARENA does not employ a Black frofessional in its matching program, although 53% of the children on the ARENA registry in 1975 were Black children. It would appear that the placement of non-white children in white homes will continue as long as the child does not have an advocate from among professionals of his racial and ethnic background.

Others reporting trans-racial placements were some state adoption coordinators and principals of private adoption services. In every instance the placements were defended on the ground that no Black adoptive families were available. On examination it was revealed that the children had not been referred to adoption services that had Black families available.

In project experience, it appeared that when funds for adoption services and related costs were made available to private agencies and the agercy employed Black staff recruitment of families was seriously started, families were studied without delay, and the homes were made available for the children who needed them.

In view of evidence of the availability of Black families and the fact that they can be found when agencies are committed to this effort through subsidies and other supports, it would follow that

trans-racial placement as a "last alternative" or "placement of last resort" cannot be defended.

Suggestions for continued efforts in Black and minority adoptions:

1. Provision of adequate funds to both the public and private sectors for program development and expansion to be available until the backlog of children needing adoption is abated. Funds would go to such purposes as --increase adoption staff, training of both adoption workers and foster care workers, financing legal activities, interstate placements, computerized information and retrieval programs, national public information programs, and subsidizing adoption processing for families unable to meet these costs.

2. Regionalizing adoption planning, recruitment, training, registration and data collection activities. What has become evident is that at the county and state level there is a lack of resources either as it relates to the child needing a home or families wanting to adopt. Children wait in one location while families wait in another. Organization at the regional level would increase the resources available to both the child population and the prospective parent population.

In addition, cooperation in listings and placements, training, conferences and meeting at the regional level would tend to have a positive broadening effect on staff involved in adoption and related specialties. Such an approach would tend to reduce the provincialism which now plagues adoption programs and it follows, would increase worker tolerance for difference and trust in the commitment and competence of others in the field.

3. Affirmative action programs should be required as a standard to include representative board members, other ethnic minority professional and outreach workers on the staffs of adoption and child service agencies that serve the Black and other ethnic communities.

4. A national public information campaign should be mounted which would present parentlessness as a result of external and internal pressures of the society rather than a fault of the natural parent(s) or the child, and encourage a sense of community responsibility as a national goal.

REFERENCES

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2. "Meeting on Placement and Adoption of Vietnamese Children in American Homes", Washington, D. C., July 25-26, 1973. Sponsored by the Agency for International Development.

3. Proposal from the Interagency Vietnam Adoption Committee (IVAC) to the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

4. AID Child Care Project and Grant Agreements, FY 1974.

5. McConnell vs Schlesinger, Secretary of Defense et. al., U. S. District Court For the Northern District of California, No. C-75-0839 Su; etc; et. al.

6. Herzog, Elizabeth; Sudia, Cecelia; Harwood, Jane; and Necomb, Carol. Families for Black Children: The Search for Adoptive Parents. An Experience Survey. (Children's Bureau) Washington, D. C., U. S. Government Printing Office, 1971.

7. Sandusky, Annie; Rea, Jane; Gallagher, Ursula; and Herzog, Elizabeth. Families for Black Children: The Search for Adoptive Parents. II. Programs and Projects. (Children's Bureau). Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1972.

APPENDIX-A - MEMBER AGENCIES

MEMBER AGENCIES

AFRO-AMERICAN FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES 440 West Division Street Chicago, Illinois 60610	Benjamin Finley Executive Director
BLACK CHILD DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE 1028 Connecticut Avenue, N. W. Washington, D. C. 20036 Suite 514	Alfred B. Herbert, Jr. Project Director
CHILD WELFARE LEAGUE OF AMERICA, INC. 67 Irving Place New York, New York 10003	Clara J. Swan (Ms) Associate Director of Field Operations
CHURCH WORLD SERVICE 475 Riverside Drive New York, New York 10027	James J. Thomas John Schauer
FRIENDS For All Children 445 South 68th Street Boulder, Colorado 80303	Wende S. Grant (Mrs.) Director
HARLEM-DOWLING CHILDREN'S SERVICE 2090 Seventh Avenue New York, New York 10027	Jospeh H. Smith
HOLT ADOPTION PROGRAM P. O. Box 2420 Eugene, Oregon 97402	John Adams
HOMES FOR BLACK CHILDREN 2340 Calvert Street Detroit, Michigan 48206	Shirley Burnette (Mrs.) Co-Director
LUTHERAN COUNCIL IN THE UNITED STATES 315 Park Avenue South New York, New York 10010	Ross T. Wilbur Director, Social Welfare Plannir

NAACP/ADOPTIVE PARENTS RECRUITMENT AND EDUCATION PROJECT 970 Hunter Street, S. W. Atlanta, Georgia 30310	Beverly Walker Worrell (Mrs.)
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BLACK SOCIAL WORKERS 1920 S. Monroe Street Denver, Colorado 80210	Louise Beasley (Mrs.)
NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC CHARITIES. 1346 Connecticut Avenue, N. W. Washington, D. C. 20036	Brother Joseph Berg
SPENCE-CHAPIN Services To Families And Children 6 East 94th Street New York, New York 10028	Jane D. Edwards (Mrs.) Executive Director
TRAVELERS AID INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL SERVICES OF AMERICA 345 East 46th Street New York, New York 10017	William H. Taylor Executive Director
U. S. CATHOLIC CONFERENCE MIGRATION AND REFUGEE SERVICE 201 Park Avenue South New York, New York 10003	Edmund E. Cummings Assistant Director
WORLD VISION RELIEF ORGANIZATION, INC. 919 West Huntington Drive Monrovia, California 91016	Dr. Edmund Janss

COOPERATING AGENCIES

Local

Afro-American Family and Community Services - Chicago, Illinois

Catholic Charities Bureau - St. Louis, Missouri

Catholic Charities Bureau, Inc. - Jacksonville, Florida

Catholic Services Bureau - St. Petersburg, Florida

Catholic Services Bureau - Ft. Lauderdale, Florida

Catholic Services Bureau - Miami, Florida

Catholic Services Bureau - Orlando, Florida

Children's Home Society - Jacksonville, Florida

Children's Home Society - Miami, Florida

Children's Home Society - Orlando, Florida

Family and Child Services - Washington, D. C.

Harlem-Dowling Children's Service - New York, New York

Homes For Black Children - Detroit, Michigan

Peirce-Warwick Adoption Service - Washington, D. C.

Spence-Chapin Services to Families and Children - New York, New York

International

Holt Children's Service - Eugene, Oregon

Travelers Aid International Social Service - New York, New York

U. S. Catholic Conference Migration & Refugee Service - New York, New York

Participating Agencies and Projects

Adopt-A-Child Project - Houston, Texas

Brookwood Adoption Agency - New York, New York

Children's Home Society - Trenton, New Jersey

Genessee County Department of Social Services - Flint, Michigan

NAACP Tri-State Adoption Project - Atlanta, Georgia

LCS Spaulding - New York, New York

Other agencies that submitted homestudies and accepted referrals are not listed.

APPENDIX-B - FORMS & LETTERS

IAC INTERAGENCY VIETNAM ADOPTION COMMITTEE

APPLICANT

PHASE - I

FOR OFFICE USE

Referred By_____

Date_____

To_____

Code_____

Date_____

Last Name_____ First Name_____ Age___

Home Address_____ Phone (area code) _____

City & State_____ Marital Status_____ Business Phone_____

Spouse Last Name_____ First Name_____ Age___

Home Address_____ Phone_____

Business Phone_____

APPLICANT	SPOUSE
Race_____	Race_____
Education/Training_____	Education/Training_____
Occupation_____ Income_____	Occupation_____ Income_____
Religion_____	Religion_____

Type of Child Desired: Age_____ Sex_____ Handicapped_____

FAMILY COMPOSITION

Number of Natural Children	Age	Sex	Number of Adoptive Children	Age	Sex

Other Dependents_____ Pets_____

HEALTH

345 East 46th Street
New York, New York 10017

Previous Agency:

Follow-up:

Referred (dates)

Contacts (dates)

Matched

Comments

Activity

INTERAGENCY VIETNAM ADOPTION COMMITTEE
345 EAST 46TH STREET
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10017

PHASE - II

ADOPTION APPLICATION

Family Name _____ / _____ / _____ / _____
surname husband wife single person

Home Address _____ Telephone: Home _____
no. & street

_____ Office _____
city or town/state/county

Additional Information	Husband	Wife	Single Person
Age			
Occupation (job title)			
Education: (highest grade; degree)			
Health status			
Religion			
Race/ethnic background			
Family income yearly			

Number of persons in household:

Number of adults: _____ Relation to applicant(s) Related (__); Unrelated (__)

Number of children 18 yrs. and under: _____

Are any of your children adopted? (__); Foster (__); Relative's child (__)

Kind of child willing to adopt: (check as many items in each category as desired)

Age range: infant - 5 yrs. (__), 6-8 yrs. (__), 9-11 yrs. (__), 12 and over (__).

Sex: Boy (__), Girl (__) Family group: sisters (__), brothers (__), brother/sister (__)

Background: Both child's parents Black (__), one parent White (__), one parent Oriental (__)
American Indian (__) Other _____

NOTE: *Some children waiting for adoptive homes are handicapped usually as a result of commonly known illnesses, birth injury, neglect in early life, other. They have received or are receiving corrective treatment. Some wear braces, or require daily medication or special diets, or therapy. Like children without handicaps, they are loving and lovable and are able to achieve in a caring adoptive family.*

Would you be willing to consider adopting a handicapped child? _____ Would you adopt a handicapped child if some of the cost for medical/other services was provided? _____

Remarks: _____

Date _____ Signature of Adoptive Applicant(s) _____
(husband / wife, single person)

FOR USE BY ADOPTION AGENCY ONLY: (Referral & Reporting Form)

Name of Agency _____

Address _____

Name of Family _____

Address: (city, state, county) _____

Date of Initial Interview _____

(Check one): Applicant(s) accepted for home study (__), Applicant(s) terminated (__).

If terminated, state reason(s) _____

_____ _____
Signature (Director/Supervisor/Social Worker) Date

PHASE - II

REQUEST FOR REIMBURSEMENT FORM

TO: Interagency Vietnam Adoption Committee
345 East 46th Street, New York, New York 10017

FROM: (agency)_____

(address)_____

Director_____
(name)

SERVICES RENDERED

1. Adoptive Home Study (__):

   Name of family_____County/State of residence_____

2. Post-Placement Supervision (__):

   Date of adoptive placement_____Child's date of birth_____

   County/State of child's origin_____

   Child's Race/Ethnic background_____

   Child's handicap, if any_____

3. Other (eg. inter-state transportation) (__):

   _____
   (specify & describe)

I hereby request reimbursement in the amount of $_____, for services rendered as described above.

Signed_____
(Authorizing Officer) (Title)

Date of Request_____

VAC FORM #B

June 11, 1975

Thank you for being so patient with us during the recent crisis. As you know, children will no longer be available from Vietnam and those who came over during the emergency babylift were matched with families for the most part, before leaving Vietnam.

We are sorry, that due to the fact that we were just becoming operational as a referral unit we did not receive registration for as many children as we were planning to place. We are hoping that all of the families who reached out so warmly for the Black/Vietnamese child will allow us to continue to help them find a child in the United States. We will be reviewing your case individually to see how we can best help you. If you would like to send us fuller information on the type of child you want or your previous efforts to adopt, please feel free to do so.

There is a child waiting for a family like yours.

Sincerely yours,

Evelyn Eggleston

Evelyn Eggleston
Secretary General

EE/

IVAC INTERAGENCY VIETNAM ADOPTION COMMITTEE

October 22, 1975

FOUNDING AGENCIES
Afro-American Family and Community Services
Black Child Development Institute
Child Welfare League of America, Inc.
Church World Service
Harlem-Dowling Children's Service
Holt Adoption Program
Homes for Black Children
Lutheran Council in the United States
NAACP/Adoptive Parents Recruitment and Education Project
National Association of Black Social Workers
National Conference of Catholic Charities
Spence-Chapin Adoption Agency
Travelers Aid International Social Services of America
U.S. Catholic Conference
World Vision Relief Organization, Inc.

Secretary General
Ms. Evelyn Eggleston

Dear Applicant(s):

The IVAC program continues to offer assistance to the many Black couples and individuals who have expressed a sincere desire to adopt a child.

For many, the avenue of adoption has become the accepted way to begin a new family or increase the size of an existing one.

Unfortunately, in the past many adoption agencies demonstrated little or no interest in Black adoptive applicants, nor did they foster the idea of adoption of children of Black parentage by Black adoptive families.

The present IVAC thrust is towards changing this picture. Through a program of public education, reimbursement and advocacy, we attempt to help Black applicants and agencies work together in the interest of the many healthy, handsome Black children of all ages who are available for adoption now.

With a view to this effort, we are writing to find out if you are still interested in adopting a child, particularly if your interest is in adopting an American child of full or part Black parentage.

Enclosed is a brochure about the IVAC program. Also enclosed is a questionnaire which we ask you to complete and return as quickly as possible. A stamped, self-addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Della B. Scott

Della B. Scott
Adoption Coordinator

Enclosures

TRAVELERS AID INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL SERVICE OF AMERICA
345 EAST 46 STREET, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10017 212 687-2747 CABLE: MIGRANTO, N.Y.

APPENDIX-C - SAMPLE LETTER OF AGREEMENT

In regard to home-studies, IVAC will reimburse (name of agency) for each adoptive home-study at the rate of $350.00 per approved study. The request for reimbursement would, of course, be made after the family has been studied and approved. The procedure for notifying IVAC is outlined below.

As regards matching and post-matching supervision, this service will be reimbursed at the rate of $350.00 for each child placed and followed in his adoptive home. This means that where two or more children are placed in the same adoptive family, (the agency) would bill IVAC for each child at the rate of $350.00. Request for reimbursement for post-placement supervision can be made 30 days after the child's placement with the adoptive family. Also, IVAC is able to reimburse agencies up to a maximum of $350.00 for such cost as transportation of the child or family for pre-placement visits or other costs which might hinder the adoption process in cases where no other resources are available to the family or agency.

As regards referral of families, our method of bringing families interested in adopting and adoption services together is by way of directing a family that contacts us to a local adoption agency near the adoptive applicant's home; concurrently, the agency is notified of the referral. We expect the majority of cases would be the result of your use of out-reach methods of recruitment.

We are enclosing a supply of IVAC registration or application forms and request for reimbursement forms. In brief, the procedure is as follows: Following the initial interview, the adoption agency forwards the completed application form to this office. This serves as notification of home-studies in process as well as to notify us of applicants terminated after first contact. (The latter information provides data for the research aspect of the project). When the home-study is completed and the family is approved as prospective adoptive family, the adoption agency will bill IVAC for services rendered, enclosing the IVAC reimbursement form in their letter. As you will note, the format provides for cross reference to the application form, and thus notifies this office of completion of a home-study. Payment will be made not more than ten (10) days after receipt of the request for reimbursement form.

In accordance with the expectation of HEW, families are to be encouraged to share in the cost of service and their contribution is to be deducted from the reimbursement request.

Families are to be informed that IVAC is facilitating the adoption process through its reimbursement program.

IVAC policies include the acceptance of married or single parents; all income levels, and all religions.

IVAC operates as an information and referral center which provides technical assistance whenever necessary.

It is our hope to receive, shortly, a response indicating your acceptance of the terms of the contract outlined herein. Should there be any questions, please do not hesitate to call on us.

Sincerely ,

Evelyn Eggleston
Secretary General

Enclosures

APPENDIX-D - ADOPTION INFORMATION SHEET

INTERAGENCY VIETNAM ADOPTION COMMITTEE PROJECT

345 East 46th Street
New York, New York 10017

ABOUT ADOPTION

An information sheet particularly for Black and other minority families who want to adopt.

by

DELLA B. SCOTT

IVAC Adoption Coordinator

Many couples and single persons consider starting a family or increasing the size of their present one through adoption. Often they would like more information about the requirements for adoption before they contact an agency to apply. Also they want to have an idea of who the adoptable children are.

THE CHILDREN

In answer to the last statement there are many children who are legally free for adoption, that is, they have no family of their own for a variety of reasons. Some of these reasons are the parents died, or decided to release the child for adoption because he/she is unable to provide for him, or the court severed parental rights because of the parents neglect, abuse or abandonment of the child. These children come into the care of public or private agencies or the courts who are responsible to find good adoptive homes for them.

Children for adoption are all ages-birth to 18 years and may be a single child or a family group of 2, 3, 4 or more brothers and sisters. Because adoption services for Black children have been neglected until recently most of the children in need of families today are children of full or part Black parentage.

In deciding on an adoptive family for a child agencies are required by law to make a home-study of the family and after the child is placed to supervise the placement until the legal adoption is finalized usually in one year. The legal adoption gives the adoptive parents the same rights and responsibilities as they would have had the child been born to them.

CRITERIA FOR ADOPTION

The state in which the adoptive applicant lives sets some criteria for adoption, mainly these refer to age, residence and marital status. The agency has additional criteria. Generally though, these are flexible since family composition and family life styles differ widely. And the needs of the children needing families also differ.

Most agencies have guidelines similar to the ones outlined below. Applicants for adoption should be:

1. Over 21 years but no specific upper age limit
2. Married at least three years, but applicants married for a shorter time will be considered
3. Single men and women who demonstrate ability to support and arrange for supervision of a child
4. Able to include another member in the family on income presently available without this becoming an unreasonable burden
5. Have a house of their own, or a rented house or apartment with sufficient space for another family member
6. Be in reasonably good health and physically active

THE APPLICATION

Persons interested in adopting should apply to a licensed public or private adoption agency in the city or county where they reside. These agencies are generally listed in the yellow pages of the telephone directory. When contact with the agency is made the applicant may be given an application to complete and return to the agency; or a date may be set for an intake interview or the applicant may be given a date to participate in a group adoption orientation meeting. If the applicants decide to continue, the agency assigns an adoption worker to make the home-study.

THE HOME-STUDY

The concern of the adoption agency is to find families in which children will have a permanent home, tender - loving care and guidance. The home-study is the way this determination is made. It involves three or more interviews with the applicants including a visit to their home. The adoption worker shares information about the agency and learns about the applicants idea of rearing children, something about their lives and aspirations, why they want to adopt and the kind of child they seek.

The home-study is generally completed in from four to six weeks. Among the documents which will be needed for the study are - photos of the family, medical reports, proof of income and the divorce decree if there has been a previous marriage. Also letters of reference from individuals who can attest to the applicants character and parenting ability will be required.

SELECTION AND PLACEMENT OF THE CHILD

When the applicants are approved to adopt they will be offered a child or children as near their preference as possible in reference to the child's sex, age, racial-ethnic bacground and health status. Many families limit their request to infants birth to 3 years and often they must wait for one, two or even three years or may not receive a child at all.

Children over the age of four are more readily available than are younger children. When the family and the agency agree on a child suitable for them placement will be made. The child may be selected from the applicants own state or may come from another state (interstate placement). In either case, the family will have an adoption worker who will asist him through the trial period and finally through the court procedures to formally adopt.

ADOPTION FEES

Most public agencies do not charge a fee, however their waiting lists are often long. Private agencies usually charge fees but many are willing to waive the fee entirely, reduce it, or charge only an application fee of about $25.00. You can feel free to discuss your feelings about agency fees.

Because of the number of children of full or part black parentage that are waiting for adoption many private agencies have opened their doors to black applicants in the interest of assisting in a national effort to increase the availability of appropriate homes for these children. Although most of these agencies do not have children in their care (most are in the child care facilities of public agencies) many states require all agencies to register approved families and children needing placement on the state adoption exchange. This means that a child might be offered immediately or soon after the family is approved to adopt.

In view of this, applicants to adopt might turn to a public or private agency, depending on their preferences. Whichever is the choice, it has been proven that those applicants who most enthusiastically and persistently pursue their goal to adopt are the ones most readily served.

OTHER COSTS

Families that are approved to adopt are usually expected to pay the cost of transportation (and lodging) to visit the child during the selection process. Also arrangements are made for older children particularly to spend some time in the prospective adoptive home and the cost for transportation is paid by the agency.

Legal fees for court procedures are paid by the adoptive family. Sometimes agencies are able to pick up a portion of this cost, if necessary. Legal fees vary in different localities but usually they are around $125.00 or less.

AMERICAN CITIZENS LIVING OVERSEAS

American citizens living outside the continental U. S. can adopt an American child. These applicants must locate a licensed agency where they are living that will be willing to conduct a home study and provide supervision after a child is placed. In addition the applicants must contact a public or private adoption agency for the placement. U. S. agencies are available that are willing to work with Americans living overseas.